## REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated July 23, 2004. Claims 1 to 4 and 6 to 14 are now pending in the application, with Claim 5 having been cancelled and new Claims 13 and 14 having been added. Claims 1 and 7 to 12 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The Summary Of The Invention portion of the specification has been amended to provide better antecedence for the claimed invention by incorporating the independent claims therein as those claims were originally presented for examination. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

Claims 1 to 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. The claims language that formed the basis for the rejections has been cancelled from the claims, thereby obviating the rejections. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,587,831 (O'Brien). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns sharing status information of users that use terminal devices. According to the invention, the user terminal generates presence or absence of the user from the terminal based on whether or not the user inputs information, or whether or not an imaging device detects the user is present. The generated information is transmitted by the terminal device to a server that uses the information to recognize whether or not a user is present or absent at a terminal device. The server searches

schedule information of registered users, updates it accordingly, and then transmits the user's present status to the terminal device. By way of example, if a user is scheduled to attend a meeting and to return from the meeting at a scheduled time, this would be reflected in the user's schedule. However, if the meeting runs longer than expected and the user does not return to the user terminal as originally scheduled (thereby maintaining their scheduled status), the user's absence will be recorded by the user terminal and this status information will be transmitted to the server so that the user's schedule will be updated. As a result, the user does not need to exit the meeting and manually update their current status in order to inform the server that the meeting is running longer than expected, but instead, the user's present status is automatically updated.

With specific reference to the claims, amended independent Claim 1 is a status information sharing system for managing status information of users who operate user terminal devices, comprising a recognition unit that recognizes a presence or absence of the users at the user terminal devices, a search unit that searches schedule information of registered users, a generation unit that generates updated status information in accordance with both the recognition of a presence or absence of the users and the searched schedule information; and an update unit that automatically updates present status information of the users based on the generated updated status information.

Amended independent Claim 7 is directed to the terminal device side of the present invention and more specifically is a user terminal device that is capable of communicating with a server device managing schedules of users who operate user terminal devices, comprising a connection unit that connects to at least a manipulation input device or an imaging device, an input unit that inputs information from the connected

manipulation unit or imaging device, a generation unit that generates information representing a presence or absence of a user at the user terminal device based on the input information, a transmission unit that transmits the generated information representing the presence or absence of the user at the user terminal device to the server device, and a receiving unit that receives present status information of the user which is updated in accordance with both the transmitted information and the schedule information managed by the server.

Amended independent Claim 8 is directed to the server side of the present invention and more specifically is a server device that is capable of communicating with user terminal devices, comprising a recognition unit that recognizes a presence or absence of users at the user terminal devices, a search unit that searches schedule information of registered users, a generation unit that generates updated status information in accordance with both the presence or absence of the user and the searched schedule information, and an update unit that automatically updates the present status information of the users based on the generated updated status information.

Amended independent Claims 9 and 11 are method and storage medium claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 7, and Claims 10 and 12 are method and storage medium claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 8.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the present invention, and in particular is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of recognizing the presence or absence of a user at a terminal device, searching schedule information of registered users and updating the schedule information based on the

recognized presence or absence, and transmitting the present status of the user to the terminal device.

O'Brien is merely seen to disclose a distributed network system in which schedules for employees is generated based on various factors, including staffing requirements, employee constraints, etc. However, nowhere is O'Brien seen to disclose that the system recognizes the presence or absence of users at user terminals, much less that status information is generated based on the user's presence or absence, and that the user's schedule is updated, with the updated present status being transmitted by a server to the user terminal. Accordingly, O'Brien is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the presently claimed invention of amended independent Claims 1 and 7 to 12.

In view of the foregoing, amended independent Claims 1 and 7 to 12, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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